

Mini-Research Essay Assignments:

During the first semester of your Olympian High Senior Year English course, you will be reading *Girls Like Us*, written by Rachel Lloyd. Each chapter of this book contains a number of terms and references that may well be unfamiliar to readers. While Lloyd sometimes gives brief explanations for these terms and references, readers can gain much insight and understanding if they engage in some additional research.

In this class, over the course of the first semester, you will be assigned 4 short papers of 1 ½ to 2 pages maximum length. Your project in these short papers is to present the information you gathered by researching a particular reference of your choice, and to discuss **how** the information from the sources you researched clarifies and extends a reader's understanding of a particular issue or passage in *Girls Like Us*.

PROMPT: Write a short paper (1 ½ to 2 pages maximum length) in which you answer the following questions:

- What is the reference that will be researched?
- Why is it necessary or important to research this reference?
- What information has the research revealed?
- How is a reader's understanding of this particular chapter of *Girls Like Us* enhanced in some way by the research presented in this paper?

Criteria for Evaluation:

Successful papers will

- Give readers some context by introducing *Girls Like Us* and this paper's project
- Briefly and accurately summarize/state the main idea of the chapter that contains the term/reference to be discussed
- Present information relevant to the term/reference gathered from at least two credible sources
- Explain how a reader's understanding of the specific chapter of *Girls Like Us* is changed or enhanced in some way by obtaining this additional researched information on the term/reference
- Be structured so that the information flows logically from one point to the next
- Adhere to the maximum length requirement and the format and conventions of formal academic prose
- Be carefully edited so that the paper is free of grammatical and typographical errors

All mini-research papers must be printed in black ink on unlined white 8 ½ x 11 paper in 12 point Times New Roman font or shared in google docs with Ms. Cadwell.

Ms. Cadwell's google id: michelle.clark-cadwell@sweetwaterschools.net

- ***You must share your document using your own Sweetwater google drive account, not your personal google drive.***
- ***You must give all permissions, can edit etc.***

MINI RESEARCH PAPER RUBRIC

Criteria	A	B	C	D
Par 1: Give readers some context by introducing CSE Book <i>Girls Like Us</i> and this paper's project	Introduction thoughtfully & clearly weaves together the information on the book & the essay's purpose/objective	Introduction of book & paper's purpose/objective are clear but may be formulaic	Introduction of book or explanation of paper's purpose/objective may be somewhat unclear or slightly inaccurate	Paper lacks introduction of book and/or context is inaccurate; explanation of book, or purpose/objective may not be stated
Par 2: Briefly and accurately summarize the chapter and introduce the term/reference to be discussed	Chapter summary is brief, well-focused, and accurate; term/reference is introduced and quoted	Chapter summary is clear & accurate; term/reference is introduced & quoted	Chapter summary is mostly accurate but may be somewhat unclear; term introduced but not quoted	Chapter summary may be confused or inaccurate; ref/term may not be clearly introduced
Par 3-4: Present information relevant to the term/reference gathered from at least two credible sources	Relevant & interesting information from 2 credible sources is accurately and clearly presented with elaboration	Information is relevant & accurate; sources are credible, includes elaboration	Information is for the most part relevant & accurate; one source may lack credibility or elaboration is weak	Information may be confused, irrelevant, or sources incomplete or not credible; may be missing elaboration
Conclusion: Explain how a reader's understanding of the specific section of <i>Girls Like Us</i> is changed in some way by obtaining this additional researched info on the term/reference	Explanation is thoughtful and demonstrates understanding of the chapter and how the research of the term affects the reader's understanding of the book; thoughtfully addresses audience, purpose, significance	Explanation is clear but may be somewhat formulaic or less insightful as to the understanding of the chapter or how the research affects the reader's understanding of the book; accurately addresses audience, purpose, significance	Explanation is weak and/or unclear. It may not include enough insight or weakly address audience, purpose, significance	Explanation is confusing, inaccurate or omitted. May not clearly address audience, purpose, significance
Be structured logically and readers are guided from one point to the next	Structure and clear explicit/implicit signposts guide readers	Structure and signposts are for the most part clear	Structure may be somewhat unclear and/or some signposts missing	Structure unclear and/or signposts are missing
Follow the format and conventions of academic writing	Format and conventions are accurately applied	Contains fewer than 2 format and convention errors	Contains 3 or 4 format or convention errors	Numerous format or convention errors
Be carefully edited so that the paper is free of grammatical and typo errors	The paper is virtually error-free	A few errors none of which obscure the meaning of sentences	A number of errors some of which weaken the meaning of the sentences	Numerous grammatical and typo errors obscure meaning.

Jane Doe

Professor Bryson

RWS 100

10 May 2008

Investigating a Reference: A Door to Understanding

In Tracy Kidder's *Mountain's Beyond Mountains*, the riveting account about the life and work of infectious disease specialist, Dr. Paul Farmer, the author, makes a reference to something called The School of the Americas. My project in this short paper is to research this reference to gain a clearer understanding of it.

The reference occurs in Chapter Two which provides background information on Haitian politics and U.S foreign policy and military involvement in that region. Specifically, the chapter traces the political history of Haiti, emphasizing the initial period of self-sufficiency that preceded the long periods of instability. However, the chapter's specific focus is on subsequent foreign takeovers, occupations, and interventions. When Kidder refers to "the infamous School of the Americas," we can see that Kidder does not endorse the work being done there. But what exactly is the School of the Americas?

Much conflicting information exists on the world wide web. The Center for International Policy describes it as follows on its web site: "The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), located at Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia, is the Defense Department's principal Spanish-language training facility for Latin American military and law-enforcement personnel (though some civilians attend as well). It is the successor to the School of the Americas (SOA), a facility established in 1946 and legally closed in 2001" (<http://www.ciponline.org/facts/soa.htm>)

Of course, the U.S. government is interested in protecting its reputations and unlikely to reveal any negative information. Additional information can be found on Wikipedia which gives a more thorough account of the criticism leveled at SOA. The criticism focuses on the human rights violations committed by some of the graduates of SOA. It is believed that the education at SOA promoted violent practices and that the site trained military insurgents, dictators, and terrorists. (www.wikipedia.School_of_the_Americas.com)

Coming across the reference to The School of the Americas, readers may have understood, as I did, that this was an organization that both Kidder and Farmer saw in a negative light, but further research has provided much additional clarification on this reference. Whereas readers may have imagined a traditional school, readers now understand that the School of the Americas is a site where the U.S. government trains members of foreign military. Clearly, in this case, additional research has proven invaluable to a reader's understanding of Kidder's and Farmer's perspective on the School of the Americas and allowed them to better understand this antipathy within the context of *Mountains Beyond Mountains*.

Add a works cited!!

Juana Sanchez

Ms. Clark-Cadwell

English 12

12 November 2012

Researching _____: A Way to Enhance Comprehension

After reading a few chapters from _____ the _____
written by _____, I realized I did not understand the meaning of the term
_____. My project in this brief paper is to research the word
_____ to gain a better understanding of the term and the text
_____.

The reference to _____ is found in chapter _____ which gives
an account of (brief summary of chapter here)

On page _____, _____ says, “_____.” But what
exactly is _____? One source that offers quite a bit of information on _____ is (website
name)_____. According to this
source,_____

_____ (cite the source by URL). Another rich source of information on
_____ is (website name)_____. This source

_____ Furthermore

_____ (cite the source by URL).

So, what has been learned from these two sources is that _____ is _____.
_____. This
information might be of particular use to _____ because
_____. Before researching this information I
thought _____ meant _____.

Answer the following questions as part of your conclusion:

1. **Who cares? How does this connect to _____** (C.S.E. book)
2. **Who is the intended audience?**
3. **Why should we care? How does this term connect to the text?**
4. **What did you gain from completing the research?**

We now know _____ and understand this new information, making it clear that this additional
research has further broadened our understanding of _____.